

SENATE BILL 851  
By Harper

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 4;  
Title 49, Chapter 7 and Title 68, Chapter 11,  
relative to fire safety.

WHEREAS, in the event of a fire emergency, time is critical in saving lives; and

WHEREAS, elevators are often used by firefighters to transport personnel, equipment,  
and victims of smoke and fire; and

WHEREAS, when elevators sense smoke they go automatically to their primary floor  
whereupon only special keys may operate such elevators; and

WHEREAS, finding the keys necessary to operate the elevators can take precious time  
away from the efforts of firefighters to suppress the fire and save lives; and

WHEREAS, if, at a minimal cost, elevator keys were kept in area accessible only to  
firefighters then the safety of residents would be greatly enhanced; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 68-11-804(c), is amended by adding  
the following new subdivision thereto:

(34) Not later than one hundred twenty (120) days after July 1, 2005, each  
nursing home with a functioning elevator must include an emergency keyed lock box that  
is installed by each bank of elevators. Such lock boxes shall be permanently mounted at  
least sixty inches (60") from the floor to the center of the boxes. The department of labor  
and workforce development shall approve the design and use of all emergency keyed  
lock boxes. Such boxes shall be operable by a universal key, no matter where such box  
is located. Only fire service keys and drop keys to the appropriate elevators shall be  
kept in such lock boxes.

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 7, Part 1, is amended by adding the following as a new, appropriately designated section thereto:

§ 49-7-135. The board of trustees of the University of Tennessee and the board of regents shall adopt uniform rules requiring the placement of an emergency keyed lock box in all student dormitories and other university housing with functioning elevators. Such emergency keyed lock box must be installed by each bank of elevators in student dormitories and other university housing. Such lock boxes shall be permanently mounted at least sixty inches (60") from the floor to the center of the boxes. The department of labor and workforce development shall approve the design and use of all emergency keyed lock boxes. Such boxes shall be operable by a universal key, no matter where such box is located. Only fire service keys and drop keys to the appropriate elevators shall be kept in such lock boxes.

SECTION 3. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 68, Chapter 11, Part 2, is amended by adding a new section thereto, as follows:

Section 68-11-259. Not later than one hundred twenty (120) days after July 1, 2005, each hospital, recuperation center, nursing home, residential hospice, home for the aged, residential HIV supportive living facility, assisted-care living facility or ambulatory surgical treatment center, except those operated by the United States government, with a functioning elevator must include an emergency keyed lock box that is installed by each bank of elevators. Such lock boxes shall be permanently mounted at least sixty inches (60") from the floor to the center of the boxes. The department of labor and workforce development shall approve the design and use of all emergency keyed lock boxes. Such boxes shall be operable by a universal key, no matter where such box is located. Only fire service keys and drop keys to the appropriate elevators shall be kept in such lock boxes.

SECTION 4. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 4, Chapter 3, Part 11, is amended by adding a new section thereto, as follows:

Section 4-3-1114. Not later than one hundred twenty (120) days after July 1, 2005, each state-owned public building under the department's control, including the state capitol and capitol annexes, with a functioning elevator must include an emergency keyed lock box that is installed by each bank of elevators. Such lock boxes shall be permanently mounted at least sixty inches (60") from the floor to the center of the boxes. The department of labor and workforce development shall approve the design and use of all emergency keyed lock boxes. Such boxes shall be operable by a universal key, no matter where such box is located. Only fire service keys and drop keys to the appropriate elevators shall be kept in such lock boxes.

SECTION 5. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.